

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 MC-02 OMB-01 AID-05 IGA-02  
/075 W

-----011755Z 013391 /44

P R 011715Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7099  
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS  
INFO CINC EUR VAIHINGEN  
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 05833

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MASS, MPOL, NATO. PO, GW  
SUBJECT: FRG TANKS FOR THE PORTUGUESE BRIGADE

REFS: A. USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN MSG ECJ4/6,  
DTG 041003Z FEB 77  
B. USMISSION NATO 1865 DTG 311815Z MAR 77  
C. STATE 070117 DTG 300103 MAR 77

BEGIN SUMMARY: AS EXPECTED, FRG REACTION TO A 23-MONTH  
DELAY IN DELIVERING M48A5 TANKS TO PORTUGAL WAS THAT  
THIS WOULD NEGATE THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY WERE BEING  
PROVIDED. IT ALSO CONSIDERS THE UPGRADING COST OF  
APPROXIMATELY 348,000 DOLLARS PER TANK TO BE SO HIGH  
AS TO MAKE THE WHOLE CONCEPT QUESTIONABLE. HOWEVER,  
THE FRG DID NOT COMPLETELY CLOSE THE DOOR TO PAYING THAT  
SUM FOR UPGRADING SHOULD SOME WAY BE FOUND TO OVERCOME  
THE TIME PROBLEM. END SUMMARY.

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1. THE EMBASSY HAD DELIBERATELY REFRAINED FROM GIVING  
THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF DEFENSE (FMOD) THE COST AND TIME  
FIGURES PRESENTED IN REFTEL A BECAUSE IT SEEMED CLEAR  
THAT A 23-MONTH DELAY WOULD MEAN THAT CONVERSION AT  
ANNISTON ARMY DEPOT WOULD FAIL TO MEET REQUIREMENTS.  
LIKE AMBASSADOR STRAUZS-HUPE (REFTEL B), WE HOPED THAT  
THE TIME DELAY CAUSED BY DIVERTING SOME UPGRADED U.S.

3. WHEN IT LOOKED AS IF THE FMOD WAS ABOUT TO RETURN TO ITS OLD POSITION THAT M48A2 TANKS ARE GOOD ENOUGH FOR PORTUGAL, EMBOFF SAID THAT THE DATA HE HAD PROVIDED WAS IN RESPONSE TO AN FRG QUERY. THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT OTHER APPROACHES WERE IMPOSSIBLE.

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ACTION EUR-12

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

/075 W

-----011756Z 013407 /43

P R 011715Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7100

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

INFO CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 05833

MATELY 14.2 MILLION DM'S OUT OF THE 25 MILLION DM'S AVAILABLE. TO DEVOTE SUCH A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE FUNDS AVAILABLE SIMPLY TO UPGRADING THE TANKS SEEMED HARDLY THE BEST USE OF RESOURCES AND WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO SELL TO THE BUDGET AND DEFENSE COMMITTEES OF THE BUNDESTAG, THEY SAID.

5. OUR FMOD CONTACTS TURNED TO ANOTHER PROBLEM WHICH THEY FELT MIGHT ARISE: THAT IS, THE LIKELIHOOD THAT TANKS UPGRADED IN AN AMERICAN FACILITY WOULD BE VIEWED BY THE PORTUGUESE AS A GIFT FROM THE AMERICAN RATHER THAN THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT. EMBASSY OFFICER POINTED OUT THAT THIS PROBLEM WOULD PRESUMABLY DISAPPEAR WERE THE TRAINING ON THESE TANKS TO BE PROVIDED BY BUNDESWEHR SOLDIERS.

6. WHILE OUR FMOD CONTACTS WERE CLEARLY TAKEN ABACK  
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BY THE COSSTS OF UPGRADING, THEY DID NOT COMPLETELY RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE FRG MIGHT PAY THEM IF THE PORTUGUESE PUT THIS AS THEIR FIRST PRIORITY. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY SAID THAT THE 23-MONTH DELAY CLEARLY MADE CONVERSION AT ANNISTON A NON-STARTER. EMBASSY OFFICER SUGGESTED THAT THE PROBLEM OF TIMING COULD BEST BE HANDLED AFTER THE FRG HAD DECIDED WHETHER THE COSTS OF CONVERSION AT ANNISTON WERE ACCEPTABLE. OUR FMOD CONTACTS SEEMED PREPARED TO PROCEED ON THAT BASIS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Review Markings:**  
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